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Budget and Taxation Committee
Education, Business and
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Joint Committees

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Ending Homelessness
Fair Practices and
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Joint Committee on Pensions

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson

SB965: Breast and Lung Cancer - Establishment of Screening Awareness Program and Insurance Coverage and Cost Sharing

Good Afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Finance Committee. I am here to present SB965 Breast and Lung Cancer - Establishment of Screening Awareness Program and Insurance Coverage and Cost Sharing.

The United States of America loses over forty-seven thousand people to breast cancer a year and over two-hundred thousand to lung cancer. Over half a million people have been diagnosed with lung cancer at some point in their life. The sad reality is that almost everyone in this room knows someone who has been diagnosed with breast or lung cancer and the stress it causes families and loved ones. Surviving cancer is half of the battle, the other half is the financial burden left on the survivors and their families. Time and money is essential in beating this disease because the cancer may progress while some people try to save money or locate means to meet their demands since they cannot afford to undergo all the necessary treatments and screenings.

The purpose of this bill is to establish a Breast and Lung Cancer Screening Awareness Program within the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). This legislation would require insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations (also known as carriers) to provide coverage for breast cancer diagnosis and associated "diagnostic imaging" and follow-up diagnostic imaging to assist in the diagnosis of lung cancer, subject to specified cost-sharing limitations. This program will help individuals to be proactive in their cancer journey and provide a sense of financial relief while enduring the gruesome reality of this disease. This is more than a piece of legislation, this is a movement to help save our loved ones and provide financial support during their trying times.

Thus, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report for SB965.